Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

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COI QUERY

Country of Origin	**IRAQ**
Title	**Dissolution of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in May 2025 and aftermath in Erbil**
Reference period	May 2025 – 11 June 2025
Date of completion	13 June 2025
Query Code	Q10-2025
Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	**N/A**

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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Iraq

Dissolution of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in May 2025 and aftermath in Erbil

For background information on the PKK in Iraq and the security situation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), in particular in Erbil, see the EUAA COI report titled Iraq - Security Situation (pp. 36-37 and 109-115), published in May 2024.

Turkish strikes on the KRI continued to be reported in early 2025; in January, a strike, allegedly targeting PKK, killed six people.[1] On 1 March 2025, after 40 years of conflict, the PKK declared a ceasefire with Türkiye, stating that 'none of our forces will take armed action unless attacked'.[2] Nevertheless, armed incidents continued to be reported after the ceasefire was announced.[3] The Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT), a US-based NGO monitoring security incidents in the KRI, recorded approximately 118 Turkish attacks in March 2025, including 86 airstrikes, with Erbil and Duhok being the most targeted governorates.[4] In April of this year, Medya News, citing local news sources, reported that Türkiye 'has significantly escalated its military operations in northern Iraq and the Kurdistan Region this month, carrying out over 1,500 cross-border attacks'.[5] Targeted areas included the regions of Duhok, Gare, Zap, Amadiya, the area of the Qandil mountains and nearby rural areas.[6] While no civilian casualties were reported, the attacks reportedly caused 'significant damage to homes, farmland, and civilian infrastructure.'[7]

On 12 May 2025, 'the PKK's 12th Congress decided to dissolve the PKK's organizational structure and end the armed struggle method',[8] indicating that the group will remain active as a political actor.[9] Information on specific aspects such as how the dissolution will take place in practice and whether Turkish troops withdraw from northern Iraq remained unclear when the announcement was published.[10] As of 18 May, the disarmament process 'remained uncertain', and conditioned on the withdrawal of Turkish troops that were still involved in military

[1] VOA News, VOA Kurdish: Turkey bombards Kurds as Baghdad, Irbil stay silent, 29 January 2025, url
[2] New Arab (The), PKK declares ceasefire with Turkey after 40 years of armed struggle, 1 March 2025, url
[3] CPT, The Continuation of Turkish Military Operations in Iraqi Kurdistan Despite PKK's Unilateral Ceasefire, 2 April 2025, url; Medya News, Turkey expands military operations in Iraq as cross-border attacks intensify, 20 April 2025, url; New Arab (The), Turkish Forces and PKK clash in northern Iraq despite fragile ceasefire, 2 March 2025, url
[4] CPT, The Continuation of Turkish Military Operations in Iraqi Kurdistan Despite PKK's Unilateral Ceasefire, 2 April 2025, url
[5] Medya News, Turkey expands military operations in Iraq as cross-border attacks intensify, 20 April 2025, url
[6] Medya News, Turkey expands military operations in Iraq as cross-border attacks intensify, 20 April 2025, url
[7] Medya News, Turkey expands military operations in Iraq as cross-border attacks intensify, 20 April 2025, url
[8] Birgun, PKK announces decision to lay down arms and dissolution, 12 May 2025, url; Rudaw, PKK declares dissolution, end to armed struggle, 12 May 2025, url
[9] Birgun, PKK announces decision to lay down arms and dissolution, 12 May 2025, url; Rudaw, PKK declares dissolution, end to armed struggle, 12 May 2025, url
[10] International Crisis Group, The PKK's Decision to Disband May Offer a Historic Chance at Peace, 16 May 2025, url; Amwaj Media, Will PKK dissolution end Turkey's military presence in Iraq?, 20 May 2025, url

operations in Zap and Metina.[11] As of May, the presence of Turkish forces in the KRI was estimated at 80 to 100 military outposts,[12] 'housing thousands' of troops.[13]

Information on the development in Erbil as of May 2025 could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within time constraints. However, the following information may be relevant.

Sources indicated that after both, the March ceasefire and the PKK dissolution was announced in May, Turkish attacks in the KRI continued.[14] On 15 May, Rudaw reported that Türkiye continued bombing targets and sending surveillance drones in the KRI.[15] During the last week of May, Shafag News reported on 128 artillery attacks by Turkish forces in Amedi, with no reported civilian casualties.[16] Describing the period of three months after the ceasefire, the CPT reported that 'Turkish strikes have surged significantly', while adding that the attacks were concentrated in specific areas in the Duhok governorate, particularly the Amedi district.[17] The source recorded 510 bombardments and attacks by Turkish forces in May 2025, all of them in Duhok.[18] Between January and May 2025, the source recorded three killed and six wounded civilians.[19]

[11] New Arab (The), Iraq signals readiness to receive PKK weapons following militant group's dissolution announcement, 18 May 2025, url
[12] International Crisis Group, The PKK's Decision to Disband May Offer a Historic Chance at Peace, 16 May 2025, url; New Arab (The), Iraq signals readiness to receive PKK weapons following militant group's dissolution announcement, 18 May 2025, url
[13] International Crisis Group, The PKK's Decision to Disband May Offer a Historic Chance at Peace, 16 May 2025, url
[14] CPT, Turkish Military Strikes Intensify and Concentrate Three Months Into Unilateral Ceasefire, Weeks After PKK Dissolution Announcement, 4 June 2025, url; New Arab (The), Iraq signals readiness to receive PKK weapons following militant group's dissolution announcement, 18 May 2025, url; Rudaw, Turkey says its anti-PKK operations continue despite progress in peace process, 15 May 2025, url; Rudaw, Two PKK fighters killed in Kurdistan Region despite peace talks, 5 June 2025, url
[15] Rudaw, Turkey says its anti-PKK operations continue despite progress in peace process, 15 May 2025, url
[16] Shafaq, 128 Turkish strikes on Duhok in one week, 30 May 2025, url
[17] CPT, Turkish Military Strikes Intensify and Concentrate Three Months Into Unilateral Ceasefire, Weeks After PKK Dissolution Announcement, 4 June 2025, url
[18] CPT, Turkish Military Strikes Intensify and Concentrate Three Months Into Unilateral Ceasefire, Weeks After PKK Dissolution Announcement, 4 June 2025, url
[19] CPT, Turkish Military Strikes Intensify and Concentrate Three Months Into Unilateral Ceasefire, Weeks After PKK Dissolution Announcement, 4 June 2025, url

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Amnesty International (AI); AP News; Al Jazeera; BBC News; Council on Foreign Relations; Deutsche Welle (DW); ECOI.net; Enabling Peace; European Union – EUAA COI Portal; Chatham House; Germany – Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF); Kurdistan24; Lawfare; Middle East Eye; Refworld; Reuters; United Nations - Security Council Report